

Message Text

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S E C R E T STATE 123152

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TAGS: NATO, PFOR, SP, MOPS

SUBJECT: NATO- SPANISH COOPERATION

1. WE CONTINUE TO SEEK MORE SERIOUS CONSIDERATION BY NATO OF STEPS WHICH WOULD LEAD TO INCREASING MILITARY PLANNING AND COOPERATION WITH SPAIN . NOW THAT THE PORT CALL OF NAVOCFORMED TO BARCELONA HAS BEEN LAID TO UNEASY REST, WE WISH TO EXAMINE WHAT OTHER MEANS WE MIGHT PURSUE TO BRING ABOUT CLOSER UNDERSTANDING BETWEEN SPAIN AND NATO.

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2. AS A NEXT STEP WE WOULD HOPE TO SECURE AGREEMENT IN THE DPC FOR SPANISH PARTICIPATION IN ANY ONE OF THE NUMEROUS NATO EXERCISES WHICH OCCUR EACH YEAR IN THE WESTERN MEDITERRANEAN.

3. THE EFFORTS TO PROMOTE A VISIT OF NAVOCFORMED TO SPAIN HIGHLIGHTED THE FOLLOWING NORWEGIAN OBJECTIONS, PRESUMABLY SHARED BY SOME OTHERS:

A. THE CALL WOULD HAVE HAD LIMITED MILITARY AND OPERATIONAL VALUE, AND WOULD NOT HAVE ENHANCED THE DEFENSE OF THE SOUTHERN FLANK;

B. AS A PREDOMINANTLY POLITICAL MOVE WITH HIGH VISIBILITY, THE PORT VISIT WOULD HAVE BEEN REPORTED BY THOSE HOSTILE TO SPAIN AS A GRATUITOUS GESTURE BY THE ALLIANCE TOWARD SPAIN, BUT WITH NO SPANISH QUID.

4. WE REGRET THE NORWEGIAN ATTITUDE OF THE PAST, BUT HOPE THAT BECAUSE OF OUR CONSULTATIONS AND ULTIMATE ACCESSION TO THE NORWEGIAN POINT OF VIEW THAT WE CAN NOW EXPECT THEIR COOPERATION IN SUPPORTING A JOINT EXERCISE, AN APPROACH WHICH:

A. COULD BE JUSTIFIED MORE EASILY THAN A PORT VISIT ON PRAGMATIC MILITARY GROUNDS BASED ON A NEED FOR COOPERATION BETWEEN FORCES IN AN AREA OF COMMON OPERATIONS INTEREST.

B. WOULD MINIMIZE THE RISKS OF CHARGES OF A ONE-SIDED POLITICAL GESTURE BY NATO TOWARD SPAIN AND WOULD ALSO HAVE THE ADVANTAGE OF LESS PUBLICITY.

5. FURTHER, WE WOULD HOPE THAT NORWAY'S POLITICAL SENSITIVITY TO NORTHERN FLANK PROBLEMS WOULD NOT PRECLUDE HER ADOPTING A MORE SYMPATHETIC ATTITUDE TOWARD SPAIN'S STRATEGIC IMPORTANCE TO BOTH THE CENTRAL REGION AND THE SOUTHERN FLANK. IF THE OBJECTIONABLE FEATURES INVOLVED IN A PORT VISIT
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COULD BE REMOVED, WE MIGHT BE ABLE TO DEVISE A MEANS OF PROMOTING SOME FORM OF REGULAR COOPERATION BETWEEN SPAIN AND NATO WITHOUT ALARMING THE NORWEGIANS AND OTHERS WHO MAY THINK IMMEDIATE NATO MEMBERSHIP FOR SPAIN IS ALL THAT WE ARE AFTER.

6. IN OUR VIEW THE QUESTION MUST FIRST BE SETTLED AT

THE POLITICAL LEVEL, WITH MEMBER GOVERNMENTS GIVING THEIR ASSENT TO SOME FORM OF COOPERATION. GUIDED IN PART BY THE COMMENTS OF THE ITALIAN PERMREP AT THE MAY 2, 1973 DPC, WE WOULD ASK THE DPC TO DISCUSS INCREASED SPANISH- NATO COOPERATION IN GENERAL AND SPANISH PARTICIPATION IN NATO EXERCISES IN PARTICULAR. OUR OBJECTIVE WOULD BE TO SECURE (1) AGREEMENT IN PRINCIPLE TO EXERCISE PARTICIPATION AND (2) A MANDATE FOR THE MC TO SUBMIT A DETAILED PLAN FOR COOPERATIVE EXERCISES.

7. BY SEPARATE ACTION, WE PROPOSE TO REQUEST USDEL MC TO REVIEW THE EXERCISES PLANNED BY NATO IN THE WESTERN MEDITERRANEAN IN CY 1973 THROUGH MID CY 1974, AND TO SUGGEST POTENTIAL CANDIDATES FOR SPANISH PARTICIPATION.

8. ONCE THE SPANISH HAD PARTICIPATED IN SUCH A NATO EXERCISE, WE MIGHT RECOMMEND THAT THEY BE INVITED TO PARTICIPATE REGULARLY AND WITH AN INCREASINGLY MORE VISIBLE PROFILE. EVENTUALLY, THE QUESTION OF A PORT VISIT COULD BE RAISED AGAIN.

9. WE WOULD APPRECIATE YOUR COMMENTS ON THIS APPROACH.
RUSH

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